

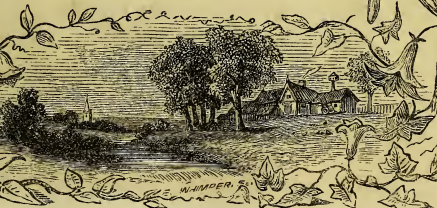


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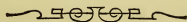
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THE VILLAGE CHILDREN AT SCHOOL.



THE WREATH OF ROSES.

- “ I’ll tell you what I mean to do,”
Said Lucy to her friend ;
“ I’ve been to Charmin’s shop to-day,
Just at the village end.
“ You should have seen how splendidly
The window was set out,
And how the ribbons and the gowns,
Were hung and spread about !
“ But oh ! the flowers, I never saw
Such beauties as they had ;
If I can’t get some for myself,
’Twill almost drive me mad.
“ The thing I long for is a wreath
Of rose-buds white and red ;
I asked the man the lowest price,
And what do you think he said ? ”
“ Perhaps ’twas sixpence, I don’t know.”
“ I see you do not, Sue ;
Why, child, ’twas just as much again,
And quite a bargain too !
“ I’ve set my mind to get that wreath,
But how, I do not know ;
I’ll turn it over in my head,
And manage it somehow.

“I am to have a lovely frock,
With flounces, and *so* wide,
And that will be made up you know,
In time for Whitsuntide.

“It is the sweetest light sky-blue,
Just fit for summer wear;
And I’m to have a ribbon sash!
Yes, Susan, you may stare!

“And I’m to have a bonnet too,
With *little* strings to tie;
And on each side a small rosette,
And ribbon strings to fly.

“Then if I get that rose-bud wreath,
And just a little lace,
It will become me very much;
The colour suits my face.

“And little Pat will be so fine,
You’ll hardly know her, Sue,
For she’s to have a new white frock,
And handsome trowsers too.

“My mother says the frock won’t come
Quite down to Patty’s knee;
And so the work and little tucks
Will all be shown, you see.

“I mean to make myself some sleeves,
Like Nancy at the hall;
And she has worked a collar too,
A petticoat and all.

“I do delight in fancy work,
I hate to hem and sew;
If I could choose I would not set
Another stitch, I know.

“ My mother likes to see us smart ;
She'd count it quite a shame,
To go to church like somebody
That you and I could name.”

Then both the girls laughed heartily,
And joked at Mary Day ;
“ A little prim, old-fashioned thing,”
The worst that they could say.

“ But how you ever get such clothes,
I cannot understand !
I wish that I could have the chance,
I know,” said Susan Brand.

“ My father scolds in such a way,
If mother goes on trust ;
But if we bought such handsome clothes,
Of course you know we must.

“ He says that useful, decent things,
Are all that he can stand ;
That finery and beggary
Go mostly hand in hand.

“ Now wife,” says he, “ I charge you well,
Don't get a beggar's name ;
Fine clothes and drinking are the things
That bring a man to shame.”

“ He talked of that fine feather too,
In little Patty's hat ;
And said, ‘ You'll see that Mrs. Bell
Will *beg* to pay for that.’ ”

“ Perhaps your father may be right,
Perhaps he may be wrong ;
But I don't care for that, I'll have
My wreath before 'tis long.”

LUCY BELL'S DREAM.

The latest thought of Lucy Bell,
As she lay down that night,
Was how to get that pretty wreath
Of rose-buds, red and white.

When Lucy's eyes were closed in sleep,
And all were gone to bed,
In dreams she still distinctly saw
The rose-buds, white and red.

The door was locked, the shutters closed,
And very dark the night,
But still the wreath of pretty buds
Was always in her sight.

When Mistress Bell woke in the night,
She heard her daughter say,
"Oh! they have got the pretty wreath,
And taken it away."

"A foolish child," said Mistress Bell,
"She's dreaming now of that,
But she can't have it, I'm in debt
For Patty's tuscan hat.

"For Lucy's frock and bonnet too,
And several little things;
Besides, I want a Sunday cap,
As well as bonnet strings.

"And Charmin spoke quite short to-day,
About my small account;
And said he wasn't warranted
To add to the amount.

"I can't say that I see just how
The payment will be met;
But that will come another day,
I shall not pay him yet.

“I hope my Jem won’t get to know,
I must take care of that;
He thinks I earned the cash to pay
For Patty’s tuscan hat.”

’Twas very long ere Mistress Bell
These anxious thoughts could still;
And when she went to sleep again,
She dreamt about the bill.

LUCY A THIEF.

How brightly does the morning sun
Shine down upon the earth;
To waken every living thing,
To gratitude and mirth.

The sweet fresh air is all astir,
To scatter rosy health;
And brings it to the working man,
As well as man of wealth.

But at the door of Mistress Bell
No welcome could it win;
For though it was so bright without,
There was a cloud within.

’Twas Lucy’s plan to fret and tease,
And now it was her thought,
That if she teased and sulked enough,
The roses would be bought.

But Lucy was mistaken here,
The bill was still to pay;
And angrily her mother said,
She’d take her sash away.

So Lucy Bell went off to school,
Exclaiming with a frown,
“I will contrive some way, I will,
To get it for my own.”

She did not care about her work,
She lost her place in class,
The wreath was plain before her eyes,
As in a looking glass.

“Are you asleep?” the Mistress said,
“What makes you blunder so?
You cannot say your tasks at all,
Not one of them you know!”

Now Lucy's place upon the form
Was next to Mary Day;
And Mary left her work-bag there,—
Upon the desk it lay.

Then Lucy took it carelessly,
And just undrew the string,
And saw a silver shilling there,
Said she, “That's just the thing!”

And almost ere an eye could wink,
Or e'en her thought be known,
She whipped it out of Mary's bag,
And popped it in her own.

“There now—I'll buy that charming wreath!
The price will just be right;”
And then her face turned very red,
And then turned very white.

MARY DAY'S SECRET.

“I wonder what you're going to buy,
Do tell me, Mary, dear;
If 'tis a secret, I won't tell;
I should so like to hear.”

“Well, Nelly, no one knows it yet,
But I will trust to you;
There are not many girls I'd tell,
But you speak always true.

“Then, tell me first how you could get,
A shilling for to spend?
You may be sure I shall not tell,
Because I am your friend.”

“I’ve earned it all at different times,
You soon may do the same;
I hemmed some pocket handkerchiefs,
And marked them with the name.

“And I have sometimes cleaned the school,
And one or two things more;
So, Nelly, you may plainly see,
How I have made my store.”

“Well, shall you buy some gingerbread,
Or puffs—they are so nice;
Or oranges, or peppermint,
Or cakes of licorice?”

“No; nothing of that kind at all,
The taste so soon is past;
I mean to lay my money out
In something that will last.”

“Then, shall you buy some pretty clothes,
A collar or a bow;
Or pretty pink silk handkerchief,
Like Lucy Bell’s, you know?”

Then Mary laughed out heartily,
And slackening her pace,
Took little Nelly by the hand,
And looking in her face,

Said,—“Now I’ll tell you, Nelly, dear,
Because we’re friends, you see;
And when you have a secret too,
Why, you can tell it me.”

“Yes, that I will,” said Nelly White,
“I wish I had one now;
But come, do tell me, what you’ll buy,
I want so much to know.”

Then Mary Day looked round to see
If any one was near,
And only spoke out loud enough
For Nelly White to hear.

“Well; I’ve two sixpences to spend;
With one I mean to buy
A present for my brother George,—
A pretty blue neck-tie.

“And with the other I intend,
(Because I’ve been to see,)
To buy a little tea-caddy,
To hold my mother’s tea.”

“I know she does so wish to have
A tidy little box;
And there is one of black japan,
And more than that—it locks!”

“But then, what will you have yourself?
Said little Nelly White;

“Oh! I shall have the fun, you know,
Of seeing their delight.

“I just can see my brother George,
He’ll laugh and jump and shout,
And say, ‘There’s no one like our Poll
The country round about.’

“And then my mother she will smile,
And give me such a kiss;
Oh! Nell, no puffs nor peppermint,
Could be so sweet as this.”

“I should so like to go with you,
To see the things you buy;
And I can bring the pretty box,
And you the blue neck-tie.”

“Well, so you shall, but let’s make haste,
We have no time to stop;”
And so they skipped along the road,
To Mr. Charmin’s shop.

THE VILLAGE SHOP.

The little girls set off and did not stop,
Till they arrived at Mr. Charmin’s shop;
And as you do not know it, I will try
To tell you something of its history.
For many years this shop had been the place
Where all the working people bought their dress;
Their grocery; their pots and pans; their cheese,
Butter, and treacle, bacon, flour, and peas,
Matches, and shot, tin-ware, and balls of string;
A little, one might say, of every thing.
Small store of each, because the shop was small,
But still for years, it quite contented all;
It was nine miles to reach the nearest town,
And few went there to buy a cap or gown.
But just twelve months before the time I write,
The village people saw a wondrous sight;
The little low shop front had given place
To one, three times the size, of fine plate glass;
And the small parlour at the back, was laid
Into the shop, to suit a larger trade.
Then off to London Mr. Charmin went,
To buy a stock for taste and ornament;
And when the window was in full display,
It was as fine as tulip beds in May;

And wives and maidens, wondering at the sight,
Gave up their senses to a new delight.
Some aged people, by experience wise,
Looked at the matter with regretful eyes ;
And said, that decent clothes would soon give place
To flowers and fringes, parasols and lace.
There were two things, which spoiled a poor man's
life—

Drink for himself, and dressing for his wife ;
They shook their heads, whene'er they had to pass,
Foreboding ill to many a village lass.
Oh dear ! how all the little girls did stop,
To feast their eyes at Mr. Charmin's shop.
They loved the ribbons, all, except the brown,
And how they wished they'd money of their own.
So many pretty things they'd like to buy,
To make themselves a heap of finery.
Then off they ran to school, afraid to stay,
And talked about the ribbons all the way.
To elder girls, it was a greater snare,
Full half their thoughts were sure to wander there ;
And more than half their talk whene'er they met,
Concerned the handsome things they meant to get.
A book of fashions in the window laid,
A charming book to every village maid.
When the young servant on an errand went,
To Charmin's shop her steps were often bent,
To ask the price of something, or to buy
Some tempting bit of useless finery ;
Or read the fashion book to get a hint,
To make the sleeve, or body of her print.
Then hastening home, and questioned, why delayed,
A ready falsehood often came to aid.
'Twas odd to see, how very soon arose
A call for dressmakers to make the clothes.

Before the fashion book had come to town,
Mothers and daughters always made their own ;
But now, not e'en the sharpest could detect
The proper *cut*, to give the right effect.
Thus in the space of just twelve months, or less,
Town hands found work in making village dress.
And some gave up—for instance, Mistress Bell—
To wash at home, she could not iron well :
And flounces must be stiff and well set out,
Or else they draggle down, or cling about.
So, whilst the love of finery increased,
Home comforts dwindled to the very least ;
And household management grew worse and
worse,
And debts increased upon an empty purse.
For as the wages kept the same, of course
The under-clothing, and the fare were worse ;
And children staid from school, for want of pence,
And thus grew up in shameful ignorance ;
And others walked with bold undaunted eye,
To shew their clothes to every passer by.
All would be fine ; the passion grew apace,
The dirtiest girl had flowers about her face,
Mixed in with gaudy bows and dingy strings,
The most unsightly, of unsightly things ;
But there were consequences, worse than these,
Some other day, I'll tell you, if you please.
I don't believe the words so often said,
That all this finery is good for trade ;
But my long history must have a stop,
For now we're all at Mr. Charmin's shop.

THE LOSS.

The shop was full as usual,
So Mary had to wait,
And felt a little anxious too,
For fear they should be late.

“I’ll get my money out,” she said,
“And when my turn is come,
I know the things I mean to buy,
And then we’ll scamper home.

“There stands the caddy on the shelf,
There’s George’s tie, you see.”
And little Nelly clapped her hands,
And jumped about with glee.

They stood just at the counter’s end,
Not far from Lucy Bell;
And saw her looking at a wreath,
The wreath she loved so well.

Then Mary Day undrew her bag,
To take the shilling out;
But soon the whole contents were turned,
And scattered all about.

“My shilling’s gone! it is not here,
Oh dear! where can it be?
I must have lost it on the road,
Do let us run and see.”

Away they went, with eager eyes,
Examining the road;
Now running here, now running there;
Alas! it was no good.

But still they hunted up and down,
And up and down again;
We all know where the shilling was,
And that the search was vain.

At last e'en little Nelly talked
In sad despairing tones ;
But still she looked among the grass,
And even moved the stones.

" Oh ! here comes Lucy Bell," she said,
" Sure now—she can't be cross ;"
And off she ran to Lucy Bell,
To tell of Mary's loss.

And such a piteous history
She made of Mary's case ;
Whilst all the time the sparkling tears,
Were rolling down her face ;
That even Lucy Bell looked grieved,
But said she could not stay ;
Though Nelly begged she'd help to look,
Before she went away.

" Well, we must give it up for lost,"
Said Mary with a sigh ;
" I did so wish to please them both ;"
And she began to cry.

And freely ran the trickling tears,
Upon her mournful face ;
She was not crying for herself,
And so, 'twas no disgrace.

" Poor mother will not have her box,
Nor George his nice neck-tie ;
But 'tis no use to fret, I know,
So Nelly, dear, good-bye."

And all these little girls went home ;
Which would you be, I pray—
Proud Lucy, with her stolen wreath,
Or weeping Mary Day ?

THE GUILTY CONSCIENCE.

'Twas very long ere Lucy Bell,
 Could get to sleep that night ;
For just as she began to doze,
 She woke up in affright.
And when she slept, she started oft,
 Then fetched a heavy sigh ;
And dreamed that something had been lost,
 And heard poor Mary cry.
If Lucy's mother had been there,
 And watching at her side ;
She might have learned the very thing
 That Lucy wished to hide.
For Lucy dreamt that she was caught,
 And then she gave a scream ;
No one can tell what they may say,
 When they are in a dream.
And as she at her breakfast sat,
 Upon the morrow morn,
She scarcely said a word, but seemed
 Dejected and forlorn.
At last her mother spoke, and said,
 “ What is the matter, child ?
'Twas but a day or two ago,
 That you were nearly wild ;
“ Because the day was close at hand,
 When all the scholars meet
At Squire Tyerman's, at the hall,
 To have the yearly treat.
“ I can't think what has happened now
 To make you look so dull ;
Your clothes I'm sure are to your mind,
 They're very beautiful.

“ I know that not a scholar there,
Will look so well as you ;”
But at each word her mother spoke,
More gloomy Lucy grew :

Still said, she was not dull at all,
Though she was fit to cry ;
So very close upon a theft,
Is sure to hang a lie.

“ How came you by that pretty wreath ?”
Again, said Mistress Bell ;
And Lucy said ’twas given her ;
Oh ! Lucy—Lucy Bell !

And then afraid, that she might have
To answer something more,
She said, ’twas time to go to school,
And started from the door.

And as she went along the road,
She was in great affright,
Lest she should see poor Mary Day,
Or little Nelly White.

There was a terror on her mind,
She could not drive away ;
She made mistakes in all her work ;
She did not care to play.

The wicked thing that she had done,
Lay on her heart like lead ;
When people spoke, her colour changed,
And down she hung her head.

But most of all she feared to meet
The eye of Mary Day ;
And at each turn she tried to keep
Quite out of Mary’s way.

And when the school broke up, she chose
To walk away alone ;
She had a secret now, she dare
Not tell to any one.

Some girls came up to her and said,
“ Why ! this is something new ;
What is the matter, Lucy Bell ? ”
Said she, “ What’s that to you ?

And when they talked about the feast,
She scarcely spoke at all ;
She felt afraid to shew her wreath
To-morrow at the hall.

So passed the day—a heavy day,
And as the night drew on,
She started up at every sound,
She feared to be alone.

For still the deed that she had done,
Lay on her heart like lead ;
And when her mother spoke to her,
She scarcely raised her head.

“ Come, tell me now about that wreath !
For I must know it all ; ”
And Lucy said, “ ’Twas given her,
By Nancy, at the hall. ”

Now Nancy was a dressy girl,
And Lucy’s cousin too ;
So Mistress Bell was satisfied,
And thought the tale was true.

She took the wreath, and pinned it in,
And said, “ Look ! that is nice ; ”
But Lucy shivered as she looked,
She felt as cold as ice.

How peacefully good children sleep !
Who nothing wrong have done ;
They're not afraid to speak the truth,
Nor fear to be alone.

And when dear Mary Day had prayed
Her prayer beside her bed ;
She lay down happily to sleep,
No trouble filled her head.

For that great God, who made us all,
Who rules the earth and sky,
Keeps every good and praying child
Beneath His watchful eye.

THE SCHOOL FEAST.

The thrush sung loud, the lark rose high,
It was a glorious morn ;
The dew-drops hung like diamonds,
Upon the springing corn.

The sun rode through the clear blue sky,
No cloud was sailing there,
And sunshine lay on all the flowers,
And sweetness filled the air.

And bright young eyes from cottage doors,
Looked out upon the sight ;
And glad young hearts were beating fast,
Forestalling their delight.

And busy hands up at the Hall,
Were cutting piles of cake,
And called on all, both great and small,
Some work to undertake.

And so the hours flew quickly by,
Until the afternoon ;
And then with flag and flageolet,
And fiddle and bassoon,

The children marched up to the Hall,
All in their best array,
And every face, excepting one,
Was satisfied and gay.

Some games had kindly been contrived,
The merry hours to pass ;
They played at ball, and races ran,
Upon the level grass.

Some children played at blindman's buff,
Some swung upon a tree ;
Until 'twas time to sing the grace,
And then sit down to tea.

'Twas wonderful to see the lumps
The little ones would take ;
And what an appetite they had
For Squire Tyerman's cake.

The tea went round, the buttered bread,
Then cake again was tried ;
Till every little hungry child
Was fully satisfied.

Then off again they went to play,
Or walk about the grounds ;
And gentlefolks who came to tea,
They also took the rounds.

A gentleman and lady walked,
Through all the happy band ;
And children smiled and curtsied low,
To pretty Mistress Bland.

And as they passed by Mary Day,
The gentleman spoke low—
“There, that’s the girl you’d like to nurse
Your little Maud, I know.”

“That very thought,” the lady said,
“Was passing through my mind ;
The sweetest face I ever saw,
So modest and so kind.”

“We’ll ask her if she wants a place ;”
And then without delay,
He asked the question pleasantly,
Of gentle Mary Day.

“When mother’s better, sir, I shall,”
She said with blushing face ;
“Well, then you’ll come to Mistress Bland,
And ask her for a place.”

He put a shilling in her hand,
And smiling then, he said,
“There, now you see, I’ve hired you
To be our little maid.”

Then walking on they joined a group,
Where Lucy Bell was queen,
And there she stood dressed out so fine,
Expecting to be seen.

“How different !” the lady said,
“What foolish airs she has ;
Do, Harry, dear, observe that girl,
Do just look at her dress !”

“Oh ! she’s not worth a second look,
So tawdry and so vain ;
I like that little rosy girl,
Who dressed so neat and plain.”

“That smart girl’s mother came to beg,
Last winter at our door;
And such a dismal tale she told,
I thought them very poor.”

“Aye, Fanny, dear,” the husband said,
“You’ve yet to understand,
That finery and beggary
Go often hand in hand.”

Just as he spoke, he felt a drop,
And looked up in the sky,
“The clouds are gathering fast,” he said,
“A thunder-storm is nigh.”

Then off he went with quickened step,
The little girls to call,
And told them all to hasten home,
Before the rain should fall.

Away they ran in haste, pell-mell,
Their different homes to find;
And in less time than you would think,
Not one was left behind.

THE THUNDER-STORM.

The first large drops fell wide apart,
Like those of summer heat,
And seem’d as if they’d not the heart
To spoil the children’s treat.

Thus many girls whose homes were near
Squire Tyerman’s at the hall,
Just reached their parents’ doors before
The rain began to fall.

But Lucy Bell and Mary Day
Had full a mile to go,
And partly through the standing corn,
And by the tall hedge-row.

Now Lucy started off at once,
She thought about her dress ;
And as she'd but a parasol,
She felt no small distress.

But Mary stopped to pin the frocks
Of many little friends ;
And ere she reached the outer gate,
The heavy rain descends.

But having pinned her tippet tight,
And turned her frock up high ;
Her large umbrella sheltered her,
And kept her nearly dry.

Still fast and faster fell the rain,
It dropped from off the trees,
And suddenly the quiet air
Sprung up into a breeze.

It blew the slender corn about,
Through which she had to pass,
And scattered showers of rain-drops down
Upon the heavy grass.

Still fast and faster fell the rain,
It was a tempest shower,
And Mary now distinctly heard
The distant thunder roar.

But on she went, she did not fear
To hear the thunder roar ;
And now she saw poor Lucy Bell
A little way before.

Her parasol, too small to shield,
From either rain or sun,
Was dripping now from every point ;
Far better had she none.

Her flying ribbons, late so gay,
Hung down in dabbled strings ;
The colour run and smudged about,
Most miserable things !

The flounces of her dress were soaked,
Much higher than her knee ;
And such a dirty draggie-tail,
'Twas pitiful to see.

“ Stop, stop,” said Mary, “ till I come,
For I can shelter you ;
My large umbrella here, you see,
Is big enough for two.”

Poor Lucy sobbed just like a child,
She was in such a plight,
And still more vexed that Mary Day
Should come and see the sight.

For Mary's kind and friendly voice
Increased her inward shame.

“ I do not want to have her help,
I'd rather have her blame.”

But Mary knew not Lucy's thoughts,
And would not be denied,
So held the large umbrella still,
Quite over Lucy's side.

“ My frock is only print,” she said,
“ And so it will not hurt ;
But yours, I doubt, will never wash,
To clean it from the dirt.

“ ’Twas such a pity that you came
So early from the feast ;
I might have kept you almost dry,
Your bonnet at the least.

“ Your pretty flowers are almost spoiled,
And those nice ribbon strings.”

“ Oh ! I don’t care about the flowers ;
I hate the nasty things.”

As Mary did not know the cause,
Nor could a reason find,
She only thought ’twas Lucy’s way,
When things weren’t to her mind.

So then she talked about the treat
They’d had up at the hall ;
And Lucy said ’twas very dull,
She was not pleased at all.

Then Mary talked of other things,
Still guarding Lucy’s dress ;
Until her proud and stubborn heart
Was melted to confess.

“ How kind,” she said, “ you are to me ! ”
And sighed a heavy sigh ;

“ I’m sure *I* had no right to think
That *you* would keep me dry.”

“ Why not ? ” said Mary, and she looked
At Lucy with surprise ;
And Lucy looked upon the ground,
She dared not raise her eyes.

“ What made you think that I should be
So spiteful and unkind ?
I’m sorry that I had to stay
So very long behind.”

“ Oh ! don’t be sorry—’tis not that—
I did not think of spite—
If you had left me in the rain,
You would have served me right.

“ I don’t deserve a thought from you ”—
And Lucy gasped for breath—
“ Oh, Mary ! it was I who took
Your shilling for this wreath.

“ I have not had a moment’s peace
Since I saw you and Nell ;
I’ve wished it back a thousand times,
But then I dare not tell.

“ I’m sure you never can forgive
The wicked thing I’ve done ;
But pray don’t let the others know,
Nor yet tell any one.”

“ I won’t, indeed,” said Mary Day,
“ You need not have a fear.”
“ Then you’re an angel, that is all,
I always knew you were.”

But now they’re come to Lucy’s door,
And there they bid farewell.

“ If I don’t copy Mary Day,
My name’s not Lucy Bell.”

GEORGE THE GENTLEMAN.

George was the prince of boys ! morn, noon, or night,
Whate’er he had to do, ’twas always right ;
No murmur, nor excuses, nor debate,
That ’twas too early, or it was too late ;

For when by George his mother's will was known,
In little time, his mother's will was done.
And as to Mary, that dear girl, and he,
Were just as happy as they well could be.
“Our little Polly,” was the name she bore,
And when her brother heard her at the door,
He went like any Squire of the land,
And took the wet umbrella from her hand,
And changed her shoes, and gently shook her dress,
Till Mary laughed at George's carefulness,
And gave him such a kiss, as sisters can,
And said, “Ah! George, you are a gentleman!”
“And how's dear mother?” “Oh, she's charmingly,
We've been so merry, Polly, she and I.
She says, she has not half the pain she had,
And that her leg is nothing like so bad;
So there's encouragement for you and me,
To persevere and go on steadily.”
“And I declare, George, I have seen this week,
That she has quite a colour on her cheek.”
“She's beautiful,” said George; oh, trust to me,
We'll have her strong, when father comes from sea;
We've still some months; that gives a famous
chance,
If, as she says, she always makes advance;
And that she shall, if we can have our way,
I think such work is just as good as play.”
“I think so too; and Father *will* be glad;
When last he left us, he was very sad,
And how he charged us to be kind and good,
And begged us both to help her all we could.”
“And so we have, and so we will, and then,
Mary, you know, he'll trust us both again;
That's what I like, it makes one feel so pleased,
Instead of being scolded, snubbed, and teased,

Like young Tom Bell ; there's always such a noise :"
" Yes, George ; but he's the very worst of boys."
" Well, so he is, but he's not all to blame ;
If I'd his mother, I should be the same ;
You can't think how they quarrel and go on,
I'm finely glad that I am not her son :
For *little* things she always chides him so,
But when he's really wrong, she lets it go."
" I pity Lucy," Mary said, and sighed.
" Well, pray don't mention her," young George
replied,
" The most unpleasant girl all round about ;
Were you like her, we should be falling out."
And then George laughed, as if 'twere possible,
That Mary Day should be like Lucy Bell.
And so they sat, and chatted for awhile,
Till Mary said, with a mysterious smile,
" I have a little business of my own
I wish to do, before our mother's down,
And want to get beforehand with my work ;
So when you wake, if 'tis a little dark,
Do call me, George."—" A secret, Mary, hey ?"
" Now do not question, brother George, I pray,
You'll know in time ;" and Mary shook her head,
And lit the candle, and went up to bed.

MARY'S SHOPPING.

Full many times, I've heard it said,
I do not say 'tis true,
That children's money has a trick
Of burning pockets through.

But whether it be true or not,
'Tis certain Mary Day
Lay planning in her bed that night,
To pay her own away.

And long before her brother George
Came tapping at the door,
She'd cleaned the grate and lit the fire,
And swept the kitchen floor.

For Mary had made up her mind,
To go without delay,
To buy the caddy and the tie,
Upon that very day.

She set the kettle on to boil,
And then she did not stop ;
But with a light and bounding step,
Set off to Charmin's shop.

The morning air was calm and sweet,
Refreshed by tempest showers ;
And heavy lay the glistening dew,
Upon the grass and flowers.

A light mist from the meadows rose,
Drawn upward to the sky ;
And every bush and leafy tree,
Was full of melody.

And Mary sometimes checked her pace,
To try if she could see
What little birds they were that sung
So sweetly in the tree.

"How beautiful it is !" she said,
And raised her beaming eyes,
And turned her honest rosy face
Full upward to the skies.

And God, who fills the earth and sky,
Looked down on Mary there ;
And as she walked along the way,
His Spirit walked with her,

And filled her heart brim-full of love
To every creature round ;
She could not for the world have hurt
An insect on the ground.

A bright green beetle, burnished gold,
Ran swiftly o'er the road ;
" You pretty little thing," she said,
" I'm sure you must be good."

The bees hummed on from flower to flower,
To sip the fragrant dew ;
" You clever, little busy bees,
I'm not so wise as you."

A rabbit next sprung o'er the path,
To gain the nearest shade ;
" You little darling dear," she said,
" You need not be afraid :

" I would not hurt you for the world,
Nor shoot you with a gun ;
Not even though you eat our peas,
You little hungry one."

And then she said, " Poor Lucy Bell,
How sorry she must be !
I'll never tell to any one
The secret she told me.

" If I had not been better taught,
I might have done just so ;
And I am sure I should not like
That any one should know.

“ I wish her mother was like mine,
How happy she might be ;
I'll ask my mother, if I may
Invite her in to tea,

“ And then perhaps she'd speak to her,
And give her good advice ;
And if she grew a better girl,
Oh dear, that would be nice !”

So Mary Day talked to herself,
And wanted no replies ;
But when she thought of Lucy Bell,
The tears rose in her eyes.

At last, before the fine shop door
She makes a sudden stop ;
She is the earliest customer
At Mr. Charmin's shop.

He soon brought out the very things
That Mary came to buy ;
But wished to know how *she* could want
A caddy and a tie ?

He liked to talk to Mary Day,
He said she'd turn out well,
And she was very ready too,
Her errand there to tell.

What Mr. Bland had given her,
And what she meant to do,
And what a great surprise 't would be
To George, and mother too.

“ That's right, my little maid,” said he,
And gave her chin a chuck,
Then filled the caddy full of tea,
And said, “ it was for luck.”

I need not tell you, then, how fast
She ran to reach her home ;
Lest she should find her mother down,
Or George to breakfast come.

She is in time—he is not in,
Her mother is not there ;
So, quick she took her bonnet off,
And placed her mother's chair.

And then beside the pot she set
The caddy full of tea,
And laid the neck-tie in a place,
Where George was sure to see.

The happiness and joy there was,
I really could not tell ;
But families who dwell in love,
They know it very well.

And sure our blessed Saviour feels
Joy in His home above,
When here upon this earth He sees
A dwelling full of love.

END OF "THE VILLAGE CHILDREN AT SCHOOL."



